7590-01

UNITED STATES NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

REGARDING PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO

FACILITY OPERATING LICENSE NO. R-126

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

DOCKET NO. 50-407

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an Amendment to Facility Operating License No. R-126 for the University of Utah TRIGA reactor located on the campus in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The Amendment will renew the Operating License for twenty years from its date of issuance, in accordance with the licensee's application dated March 8, 1983, as supplemented. Opportunity for hearing was afforded by the Notice of Proposed Renewal of Facility License published in the Federal Register on July 14, 1983 at 48 FR 32244.

Continued operation of the reactor will not require alteration of buildings or structures, will not lead to changes in effluents released from the facility to the environment, will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, and will not involve any unresolved issues concerning alternative uses of available resources. Based on the foregoing and on the Environmental Assessment, the Commission concludes that renewal of the license will not result in any significant environmental impacts.

Finding of No Significant Impact

The Commission has determined not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed action. The Commission has prepared an Environmental Assessment of this action, dated March 27, 1985, and has concluded that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment.

Summary of Environmental Impacts As Described in the Environmental Assessment

The proposed action would authorize the licensee to continue operating the reactor in the same manner that it has been operated since initial licensing in 1975. The environmental impacts associated with the continued operation of the facility are discussed in an Environmental Assessment associated with this action. The Assessment concluded that continued operation of the University of Utah reactor for an additional 20 years will not result in any significant environmental impacts on air, water, land or biota in the area, and that an Environmental Impact Statement need not be prepared. These conclusions were based on the following:

a) the excess reactivity available under the technical specifications is insufficient to support a reactor transient generating enough energy to cause overheating of the fuel or loss of integrity of the cladding;

b) at a thermal power level of 100 kilowatts, the inventory of fission products in the fuel cannot generate sufficient radioactive decay heat to cause fuel damage even in the hypothetical event of instantaneous total loss of coolant, and

c) the hypothetical loss of integrity of the cladding of the maximum irradiated fuel rod will not lead to radiation exposures in the unrestricted environment that exceed guideline values of 10 CFR 20.

For further details with respect to this proposed action, see the application for license renewal dated March 8, 1983, as supplemented, the Environmental Assessment, and the Safety Evaluation Report prepared by the staff (NUREG-1096). These documents and this Notice of Finding of No Significant Environmental Impact are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, 1717 H Street NW, Washington, D. C. 20555. Copies may be obtained upon request addressed to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, ATTENTION: Director, Division of Licensing.

Copies of NUREG-1096 may be purchased by calling (301) 492-9530 or by writing to the Publication Services Section, Document Management Branch, Division of Technical Information and Document Control, U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D. C. 20555; or purchased from the National Technical Information Service, Department of Commerce, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, Virginia 22161.

Dated at Bethesda, Maryland, this 9th day of April, 1985.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Hugh L. Thompson, Jr., Director
Division of Licensing